



Moving and Migration for Swedish Genealogy

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There are many reasons why people move from one location to another. Sometimes the move was temporary for work or business purposes. Other times it was a relocation of primary residence. If a person moved from one location where they were “generally known” to another where they were also “generally known” the move was easier. Moving to a location where you were “completely unknown” was risky as it always stirred mistrust among the locals. The remedy to this problem was handled in two ways: 1. A person had to notify the civil authorities regarding the move to get a travel pass (sometimes literally translated as a passport) and 2. A person had to notify the parish authorities to get a moving certificate which would be given to the priest after arriving in a parish.

Since there are other resources to learn about the church moving certificates and parish moving records, these topics will not be covered in this presentation. For more information, see: Swedish Moving In and Out Records (Inflyttnings och Utflyttningslängder) in the FamilySearch Wiki.

This presentation will focus on the travel pass (respass), the traveling inn (gästgivarigård), with some comments on the migration patterns in the kingdom of Sweden.

Patterns of Migration to Sweden

Generally there are no large migrations of “common people” from any European country to Sweden between medieval times and about 1600. One of the earliest examples is the medieval merchant guild called the Hanseatic League that began in the 1100’s. In Medieval times the cities of Kalmar, Söderköping, Visby, and Stockholm experienced a significant increase of German immigration. By 1350 it is estimated that 40% of the people in Uppsala had German names and by 1450 about one third of the citizens of Stockholm were German. Merchants, craftsmen, and miners from Germany continued to migrate to Swedish cities throughout the 1400s and 1500s.

During the 1600s small groups of Walloons migrated from southern Belgium and northern France. Their technique with iron mining and production was so good that King Gustav II Adolf officially encouraged more Walloons to migrate to Sweden during this period. At this same time, merchants and industrialists from England and Holland were migrating to Sweden, particularly the city of Göteborg. The largest group of emigrants to Sweden during the 1600s was the Finns with an estimated 40,000 who migrated primarily to Värmland and Dalarna.

Another group to immigrate to Sweden was the Jews. The earliest account of Jews in Sweden was back in the 1500s. By the 1770s the first Jewish congregation was established in Stockholm. In 1782 King Gustav III passed a decree that stated that the Jews would have to live in Stockholm, Göteborg, or

Norrköping. Migration was limited to their prosperity and to stay required a large sum of money. There were many civil restrictions imposed on the Jews. It wasn't until 1870 that full citizen rights were granted to the Jews in Sweden.

As early as the 1500's Sweden has had an immigration of the nomadic people Romer (also called gypsies) who came from the region around Turkey, then later through Eastern Europe. In Swedish they have also been called "tattare" and "zigenare". Through the years there have been strict laws for the Romer, including expelling of the women and children and the killing of the men passed in 1617. During the 1700s many of the Romer men served in the Swedish military. Because the Romer were nomadic they were often associated to certain occupations such as peddling small goods, military service, castrating livestock, or rag and paper gathering. It's estimated in the last 4 centuries there have been about 10,000 Romer from various countries who immigrated to Sweden.

Migration of Population in the Kingdom of Sweden

Migration within a country could happen for many reasons. Perhaps the biggest reason was occupational such as a student craftsman traveling to learn additional techniques, a smith who traveled to the customer, or a man with military assignments. A person might have worked in the shipping of goods to the cities, or distribution of products to rural areas. Shipping was easiest by waterways in the warm seasons and by sled in the winter. Other reasons include the industrial revolution where so many left the rural areas hoping for a better life in the cities. This was especially true in Stockholm. People also moved as life changed such as an elderly parent who might have moved to join one of their children's household. Whatever the case, when people traveled with work, or relocated their residence, it was recorded. The questions are, how well was it recorded, and did the record survive?

Passtvangen

Like other countries in medieval times, Sweden required travelers to carry papers to state identification or purpose for all people who were moving into an unfamiliar community. This included people coming to Sweden from other counties. One example of this from Gustaf Vasa was written on May 30, 1555 that stated: every merchant should have in possession, "vägabref eller passbordh" from the city or town where he resides.¹ The necessity for carrying papers for travel was reinforced with the law passed on Oct. 20, 1603 that stated: it is forbidden to provide a horse or carriage for anyone traveling without a travel pass. The 1603 law also declared: anyone traveling to or from Sweden must carry a travel pass. These laws were kept throughout the 1600 and 1700's and were revised in the early 1800's.

The travel pass was created by the länstyrelse (county administrative office) or in some cases a city magistrate.

¹ Nordisk familjebok. Uggelupplagen 21, Pass, Stockholm 1915, page 179

On September 21, 1860 the legal requirement of carrying a travel pass was abolished for all travel within the country, and for all travel to or from Sweden. There were some exceptions, for example when the law forbidding imprisonment with hard labor for vagrancy was abolished on June 12, 1885, the prisoners were sent home or to another place with a travel pass. Likewise with the law of 1906 released prisoners from a prison had to have travel papers which provided some ongoing control by the prison system. Although there was no legal need for a person to carry a passport when leaving Sweden, it might have been advisable or even required when traveling to other countries for example by seaman, or to other countries such as Russia and some parts of Germany. This kind of passport was often created by the Utrikesdepartementet (department of foreign affairs), a consulate office, or by royal command.

With the outbreak of World War I, a legal requirement to carry a passport for all travel to or from the country was instated. Between 1860 and 1914 there was no “civil travel pass” required for travel within the country. Nor was there a travel pass required for people traveling to or from other countries.

The content found in the passhandlingar (also called passjournaler) will vary according to the time and place when the record was kept. There was no standardization to how the information was organized in the passjournaler or passhandlingar records. Generally the content in both cases should include:

- The name of the person traveling
- Who or where the travel pass was issued
- The destination of the traveler
- The conditions or provisions associated to the trip

The actual travel pass was the personal property of the traveler. There was no standardization to how the information was organized on the actual travel pass. The content of the travel pass should include:

- Name of the traveler
- Destination
- A time period for which the pass is valid
- The date when the pass was issued
- The name of the civil authority who issued the pass
- The purpose of the journey
- Possibly mention of a fee that was paid for the pass
- Later example, might include physical description

The person carrying the pass had to accomplish their travel purposes within the time of validity.

Access to Passhandlingar

The passhandlingar are found in the landstatens arkiv meaning the landskansliet, kronofogden, and kronolänsmann collections. They can also be found in the police archives. All of these collections are kept in the provincial archives (landsarkiv.) The genealogical society called Genealogiska Föreningen has a project to digitize and index the “In-Kingdom” travel pass records between 1812 – 1860. Right now

(August 2016) the database is only accessible to members of the society through their website at:
<http://www.genealogi.net/projekt/inrikespass-1700-tal/>

Gästgivariväsendet

In 1636 a regulation (gästgivariordning) was created to establish a system for travelers and for traveler inns that would remain until the railway system was created for widespread passenger use beginning in 1856. The traveler inns were built approximately 6 ½ miles (English) from each other. The traveler innkeeper (gästgivare) had some benefits such as some tax exemptions. He also had exclusive rights to distribute beer, wine, and brandy in the area. It was decided that the rooms within the inns would be roughly standardized, one level for the nobility, another for honorable people, and another for general company. The rights of the traveler and the gästgivare were closely regulated. The rates were created by the county authorities. The record for the inn (gästgivaridagbok) was used to record the complaints of both the innkeeper and the travelers. The cost to print the books was paid by the government and copies were sent routinely to the gästgivarigårds. Every month the used books were sent into the kronolänsmann or the magistrate for accountability. The farmers provided support for the horses used for the transportation, by providing the animals or through a special tax "sjutsfärdspenning" up until 1878. Beginning in 1809 the rate of travel was also regulated at one and a half Swedish miles (approximately 6 English miles) per hour. See an example of a government in at:
http://www.hosserudkullen.se/forskning/slakt_se_anskolund.html

The gästgivaridagbok

The first page of a gästgivaridagbok shows the name of the gästgivarigård, the names of the nearest other gästgivarigårds with the accompanying distance, along with the number of horses traveling between those distances. See an example of a gästgivaridagbok at:
<http://www.skanearkiv.se/Portals/15/resande/pages/glum.html>

Access to Gästgivaridagboks:

The gästgivaridagboks can be found through the kronofogden's and kronolänsmann's collections for the rural areas. They are found in the magistrate collections for the cities. There are also records about the transportation and gästgivari system in the länstyrelsens collections.

Timeline of Road development:

Up until 1944 the responsibility for the building, maintenance, and road repair was upon the farmers regardless of how large or small their farm was. For example, the medieval law from the 1200's for Södermanland County stated: "Building bridges and clearing roads is to be done by everyone, both those

who own a smaller piece of land in the hamlet and those who own more”² This regulation is found in the medieval law rolls of other provinces with small variations. The first national regulation was created in 1350 with King Magnus Eriksson’s national legislation.

Timeline

1,800 – 500 bc: Bronze Age: There are no roads, or traces of roads from this period.

500 b.c. – 500 ad: Iron Age: Some roads in Sweden have been identified back to this period.

1350: King Magnus national laws: standardized the laws throughout the kingdom.

1523 – 1654: Vasa dynasty: improved roads greatly. For example: 1649 when Queen Kristina issued a new posting ordinance which required milestones and mileposts.

1666 – 1686: National Road surveyor was created: The intention was to have an expert and advisor on the question of roads. The position was forgotten by 1686.

1734: Swedish Legal Reform: revised national laws on roads. The law classified roads into groups: public roads, church roads, mill roads and hamlet roads. The landowning farmers were still obligated to create and maintain roads. They also had responsibilities to provide horses for the transport of travelers. This unpopular burden remained throughout the 1800s.

1841: Swedish National Road Administration is established. Committees oversaw the roads for their respective area.

1895: Road Act: distributed road responsibilities in accordance with taxation value.

1944: the national road administration was created. All the building, maintenance, and repair was nationally centralized.

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² Vägverket. Svensk vägadministration, en historisk översikt. 2007, p. 10